



**Solicitation Information
January 17, 2013**

Addendum #1

RFP # 7458405

Title: STATEWIDE SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES PROGRAM

Submission Deadline: January 31, 2013 at 11:30 AM (EST)

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO JANUARY 31, 2013 AT 11:30 AM

ATTACHED ARE VENDOR QUESTIONS WITH STATE RESPONSES. NO FURTHER QUESTIONS WILL BE ANSWERED.

**Gail Walsh
Chief Buyer**

**RIDE Responses to RFP #7458405 Vendor Questions- Statewide School Food Service Program
January 17, 2013**

Note: although the term “district” is used, this term encompasses state- operated schools and charter schools.

1. Please provide a detailed operating statement and contract term expirations for the (15) districts [Burrillville, Central Falls, Chariho, Coventry, East Greenwich, Jamestown, Johnston, Lincoln, New Shoreham, North Smithfield, North Providence, Scituate, Smithfield, Davies and International Charter] currently under the statewide contract.

RIDE Response: All of the above contracts expire as of June 30, 2013. Attached are the SFY 2012 operating statements for participating districts. **This information is being provided in a downloadable .zip attachment. Please click on the letter ‘D’ in the column labeled ‘Info.’**

2. Will there be more than one successful proposer?

RIDE Response: Refer to page 6 of the RFP – (I. **Background/Overview**, section II-Current Status of Program) “The purpose of this RFP, therefore, is to select a single vendor to provide a Program that any of RI’s school districts, charter schools and state schools may opt to contract with. “

3. Is it mandatory to submit a bid to Option 1? (Page 25)

RIDE Response: Yes, all bids must include Proposed Fiscal Guarantee -Option 1.

4. Define how the purchase/quote in system will work for large food purchases. (Page 8)

RIDE Response: This FSMC procurement is made up of two (2) documents: The RFP and the Prototype FSMC Agreement. Page 8 of the RFP states that the Program will seek the lowest cost for large food and equipment purchases through a competitive bid process which includes the identification of any procurement service fees.

This language supports the Agreement’s requirement (page 18- I) which states that prices charged by the vendor to the LEA must be competitive.

5. Will the successful statewide vendor be able to participate in RFP processes if a school district decides not to participate in the statewide program?

RIDE Response: Yes, if a district decides that they want to go out to bid for FSMC services, the Program vendor could participate independently in that bid process. Note that any district going out to bid will be required to utilize the new RIDE Prototype RFP and Agreement. However, if a district does opt to go out to bid, they could still ultimately decide to participate in the statewide Program.

6. Please provide the current management structure of the statewide program vendor.

RIDE Response: The current vendor's regional vice president and vice president of operations are the corporate contacts for RIDE's Office of Statewide Efficiencies.

On a daily basis, the vendor's RI District Manager acts as the liaison to RIDE's Child Nutrition Program Administrator regarding contracting, fiscal performance, program operations and compliance with the RFP's scope of work.

The District Manager is also the vendor's representative to each participating district and, as such, continues to be a critical point of contact for the district.

As appropriate, and depending on the issue at hand, the Child Nutrition Program Administrator may request that the vendor's RI general manager of operations become involved in relevant issues.

RIDE has access to the district level food service director, but this generally occurs through the vendor's District manager and/or through the vendor's general manager of operations.

7. Does NutriKids meet all the requirements listed in the RFP as listed in Appendix VIII?

RIDE Response: Yes, NutriKids has the capacity to meet all the requirements. To successfully implement this requirement, the vendor and the district have to confer with the Child Nutrition Program IT consultants to establish the required electronic files.

Note that RIDE does not endorse any specific POS brand.

8. Please provide information regarding how the current statewide system is performing with direct uploads on CNP Connect compared with the requirements in the RFP Appendix VIII.

RIDE Response: Currently, 11 of the 15 participating districts perform direct uploads into CNP Connect. Two of the districts will institute the direct upload by February 2013.

9. What process will be used to review the proposals?

RIDE Response: An evaluation team will be assembled which includes representation from school districts and RIDE. The evaluation will be based on the technical proposal required elements included in the RFP.

10. When do you anticipate a decision?

RIDE Response: RIDE anticipates announcing a decision by the end of February 2013 or early March 2013.

11. Is there a rating scale used to assess the current vendor performance? How are they measuring against your expectations or metrics?

RIDE Response: The vendor met RIDE's fiscal and programmatic goals.

12. Will all thirteen school districts currently enrolled in program remain in the program on July 1, 2013?

RIDE Response: The final decision is the districts. Any district has the ability to join the Program or to opt out of the Program. RIDE anticipates that the vendor selected through this procurement process will be fully able to meet the needs of our currently participating districts.

13. Please define lower costs and improved services as outlined on page 6 of the RFP. "This will not only result in lower costs, improved services and increases student participation at the district level, but also generate increased efficiency of statewide operations..."

RIDE Response: Since the Program was initiated in 2008/2009 through 2011/2012, participating districts fees decreased by a total of \$1.4 mil; an average of 64% reduction in yearly fees. RIDE anticipates that the vendor selected will continue to provide quality services at a very competitive, transparent fee structure.

Examples of improved services are listed on Page 7 which requires that the selected vendor:

- Offer healthier foods which comply with new USDA regulations and RINR,
- Increase student participation in all schools
- Increase breakfast participation (especially in lower economic communities),
- Utilize locally grown produce and the Farm to School Program,
- Support eligible schools in the FFVP,
- Actively participate in the successful implementation of the Local School Wellness Policies,
- Support schools in achieving recognition through the HUSSC initiative

14. How will the state encourage participation in the statewide program among RI school districts? (Page 7)

RIDE Response: Several strategies have been used to encourage increased Program participation among school districts.

Prior to the development of this RFP, RIDE solicited input from participating and non-participating school districts. Based on this feedback, RIDE developed the RFP's Scope of Work (page 9) to better meet the needs of districts. The expectation is that additional districts will opt to participate in the Program as more of their district's needs are met.

In addition, RIDE will:

- Contact all districts and ask to present information on the benefits of Program participation,
- As part of the Office of Statewide Efficiencies, present Program information at school committee meetings and other district level events on the fiscal and programmatic impact of Program participation, and
- Utilize the RIDE superintendent, business managers and wellness committee list serves to inform districts of the RFP process and outcomes, and to provide both fiscal and programmatic updates.

15. Given the extent of the informational request and the importance in the success for this program for the State and the Districts it serves, will you grant an extension of two weeks (January 24th to February 7th) so that each potential vendor can assemble a detailed response that serves the best interests of the State?

RIDE Response: RIDE will grant a one week extension (from January 24th to January 31st, 2013) to provide ample time for the development of bid responses.

16. Section I.II, on page 6 of the RFP, states that SFAs opting to go out to bid individually, rather than participating in the statewide program, will be required to use the RIDE Food Service Management Company RFP and Prototype Agreement. Please provide copies of the RIDE Food Service Management Company RFP and Prototype Agreement.

RIDE Response: See attached documents that are for use by Districts who opt to go to bid for Food Service Management Company services. . **This information is being provided in a downloadable .zip attachment. Please click on the letter 'D' in the column labeled 'Info.'**

17. In the event that an SFA joining the statewide program during a renewal year requests a capital investment or other financial commitment from the successful FSMC, and/or the FSMC wishes to propose a program investment, can the FSMC amortize that investment over five years or will the amortization period be limited to the number of renewal years remaining in the statewide program?

RIDE Response: This FSMC procurement is made up of two (2) documents: The RFP and the Prototype FSMC Agreement. Page 22 (section 7.7 and 7.8) of the Agreement responded to this issue.

18. What is the required breakfast and snack equivalency for this contract?

RIDE Response: The meal equivalent definitions are on page 7 (Section 3.11) of the Prototype FSMC Agreement.

- 4 USDA reimbursable after school snacks = 1 reimbursable Meal Equivalent
- 3 USDA reimbursable breakfasts = 2 reimbursable Meal Equivalents

19. What is the timeline for the decision process?

RIDE Response: RIDE anticipates announcing a decision by the end of February 2013 or early March 2013.

20. Who will be on the selection committee and what is the selection process?

RIDE Response: An evaluation team will be assembled which includes representation from school districts and RIDE. The evaluation will be based on the technical proposal required elements included in the RFP.